WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for treating a vascular condition, comprising:

a catheter;

a stent assembly coupled to the catheter; the stent assembly comprising a coated stent including a stent framework and a drug coating disposed on at least a portion of the stent framework; and

a protective sleeve removably covering the stent deployment assembly and at least a portion of the catheter, wherein said sleeve comprises a hollow tube having a proximal outer diameter, a medial inner diameter, and a distal inner diameter; and wherein the distal inner diameter is sufficient to encircle an outer diameter of the stent deployment assembly, and wherein the medial inner diameter is sufficient to encircle an outer diameter of the catheter, and wherein the distal inner diameter is open, wherein the protective sleeve is removed from covering the stent framework prior to deploying the stent.

2. The system of claim 1 further comprising a port to a vessel, wherein the port comprises a toughy lock, wherein the toughy lock further comprises an o-ring having an o-ring inner diameter, wherein the proximal outer diameter of the sleeve is greater than the o-ring inner diameter.

3. The system of claim 1 further comprising a guide wire, and wherein the sleeve further comprises a guide wire notch, wherein the guide wire extends longitudinally through the guide wire notch.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein the guide wire notch extends at least part of the distance from an outer surface of the sleeve through an inner surface of the sleeve.

5. The system of claim 1 wherein the sleeve comprises a material selected from the group consisting of nylon, polyurethane, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene, polytetrafluoroethylene, expanded polytetrafluoroethylene, an elastane, a thermoplastic elastomer, a woven polymeric fabric, or an expandable polymeric sheet.

6. The system of claim 1 wherein the sleeve comprises a material that dissolves while in a vasculature.

7. The system of claim 1 further comprising:
a lubricious coating on at least a portion of a surface of the sleeve.

8. The system of claim 7 wherein the lubricious coating comprises a material selected from the group consisting of phosphorylcholine, a hydrophilic coating, and a lubricious film.

9. The system of claim 1 wherein the sleeve has a distal inner diameter of substantially .071 centimeters, a distal outer diameter of substantially .0825 centimeters, a medial inner diameter of .045 centimeters, and a medial outer diameter of .055 centimeters.

10. The system of claim 1 further comprising a port to a vessel, wherein the port comprises a toughy lock, wherein the toughy lock further comprises an o-ring that comprises an o-ring inner diameter, wherein the proximal outer diameter of the sleeve is less than the o-ring inner diameter.

11. A protective sleeve for a stent assembly, comprising:

A hollow tube having a proximal outer diameter, a medial inner diameter, and a distal inner diameter, wherein the distal inner diameter is sufficient to encircle an outer diameter of the stent assembly, and wherein the distal inner diameter is open, and wherein the sleeve retractably covers the stent deployment assembly.

12. The sleeve of claim 11 wherein the sleeve has a distal inner diameter of substantially .071 centimeters, a distal outer diameter of substantially .0825 centimeters, a medial inner diameter of .045 centimeters, and a medial outer diameter of .055 centimeters.

13. The sleeve of claim 11 wherein the sleeve has an outer diameter that is greater than the inner diameter of an o-ring of a toughy lock, and wherein the sleeve can not pass the o-ring of the toughy lock during deployment of the stent assembly.

14. The sleeve of claim 11 wherein the sleeve has an outer diameter that is less than the inner diameter of an o-ring of a toughy lock, and wherein the sleeve passes the o-ring of the toughy lock during deployment, and wherein the sleeve is removed from the stent assembly at a site where the stent is to be deployed.

15. The sleeve of claim 11 wherein the sleeve has a distal inner diameter of substantially .071 centimeters, a distal outer diameter of substantially .0825 centimeters, a medial inner diameter of .045 centimeters, and a medial outer diameter of .055 centimeters.

16. The sleeve of claim 11 further comprising a lubricious coating on at least a portion of a surface of the sleeve.

17. The sleeve of claim 11 wherein the lubricious coating comprises a material selected from the group consisting of phosphorylcholine, a hydrophilic coating, and a lubricious film.

18. The system of claim 11 wherein the sleeve comprises a material selected from the group consisting of nylon, polyurethane, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene, polytetrafluoroethylene, expanded polytetrafluoroethylene, an elastane, a thermoplastic elastomer, a woven polymeric fabric, an expandable polymeric sheet and a material that dissolves while in a vasculature.

19. A system for treating a vascular condition, comprising:

a catheter;

a stent assembly coupled to the catheter; the stent assembly comprising a coated stent including a stent framework and a drug-polymer coating on at least a portion of the stent framework; and

means for protecting a surface of the stent framework.